



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE  
Edina Transportation Commission  
Public Hearing for  
W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street/Cornelia Area Traffic Study**

Thursday, January 31, 2008

Edina City Hall  
4801 West 50<sup>th</sup> Street  
Council Chambers

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**Les Wanninger, Steve Brown, Jean White, Marc Usem, Paul Mooty, Warren Plante**

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**Hilah Almog, Geof Workinger**

**STAFF PRESENT:**

**Jack Sullivan, Sharon Allison**

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The public hearing of the Edina Transportation Commission (ETC) was called to order by chair Wanninger at 6:00 p.m. Chair Wanninger explained that this special meeting is a public hearing for the residents along the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street corridor to provide feedback regarding the concepts that were presented at the open house on January 23 and the ETC is hoping for lots of input.

Chair Wanninger explained that the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street/Cornelia Area Traffic Study began as a result of findings by the Traffic Taskforce. He said the Taskforce identified various issue areas and the ETC was formed to address those issue areas and other traffic-related concerns. He said NE Edina was given top priority followed by W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street. The NE Edina traffic study is completed and implementation began in 2007 and will continue through 2009. And they are now focusing on W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street.

Chair Wanninger said the study process for W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street began with the consulting firm, SRF, collecting data, which was then presented to the public at the first open house on November 28, 2006. Three public hearings were scheduled to gather input and consequently, a Study Advisory Committee (SAC) formed. Chair Wanninger said they used a similar process to the NE Edina study because the process worked well in an area with multiple stakeholders, similar to W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street. After several meetings, the SAC decided that a name change for the study area was needed and 'Cornelia Area' was added to reflect a broader study area.

Based on comments from the public and data collected, chair Wanninger said the SAC identified the issues as volume, speed, difficulty getting out of driveways and onto W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street, safety of schools, etc. The consultant was then asked to develop concept designs to remedy the issues and the concept designs were presented at the open house on January 23. The concepts are currently listed on the City's website at <http://www.ci.edina.mn.us/traffic/70thStreetStudy.htm>.

The next SAC meeting is scheduled for February 26, at Christ Presbyterian Church (CPC) and at that time, the committee will review and consider all comments received and develop a recommendation. The SAC will make a recommendation to the ETC and more public hearings will be scheduled to gather more input, including a 30-day comment period and an open house. Chair Wanninger reiterated that this process will continue until the SAC has a strong recommendation. He said ultimately, the ETC will make a recommendation to the Council sometime this summer.

Chair Wanninger explained that everyone will be allowed 3 minutes to speak; however, the Commissioners would not respond to comments or questions tonight, rather, the comments and questions will be summarized by staff and a response drafted by the appropriate personnel. He said comments in writing are acceptable from those who do not wish to speak in public. He asked that everyone be respectful of each other. The floor was open for comments.

**Ronald Rich, 7008 West Shore Drive**

**Cornelia Neighborhood Association (see handout #1)**

- Neighbors have a concept, some details have changed.
- Thanked ETC for being open-minded and listening to them.
- Concept was labeled as Alternative D; few people want the status-quo.
- Believe they are in favor with ETC/SAC, except for one major exception – 19,300 cars each year by SRF plans; no reduction of traffic seen in their plans and this is the issue that needs to be addressed.
- Came up with a concept that met most of the needs, but not being considered as a serious option.
- Some of the issues such as trucks on W. 70<sup>th</sup>, on-street parking, taking land, accessing the roadway easily are not addressed.
- They've tried to integrate everything that the neighbors want into their concept such as narrow lanes to restrict traffic.
- SRF's concepts are relatively expensive and cannot be done until 2012; would like change sooner rather than later. Their concept is doable and less costly and can be done in the interim.
- In a letter on December 17, they presented what they would like to see implemented. It restricts thru traffic and would have a model road and calm traffic. This is better than roundabouts and taking land and it can be done as an interim in 2009. And later can add one of the other concepts.
- All the concepts proposed are included in their plan and it restricts thru traffic with traffic diverted to W. 77<sup>th</sup> St. and Crosstown to make plan work.
- Comp Plan of 19,300 cars a day must go, they will not accept any solution that includes this count. It appears the ETC has little control in making this change; let's go to the people who have control. Traffic will not increase by this much by 2030 given the climate change, etc. If it means talking to the Planning Commission or Met Council, let's do it or whomever else. Want a comprehensive solution and believe they have one. If SRF is under pressure to use this and potentially the rest of Edina - redesign. SRF said it is out of the scope of the study and if this is the case, put it in the scope of the study. All are united on traffic reduction – please help us to get beyond this.

**Dan Bowles, 4809 Wilford Way**  
**Representing CPC (see handout #2)**

- Has no comment on the concept designs as long as they can get in and out of the property safely and efficiently and is not taking a position on the roundabouts one way or the other.
- Comments focused on intersections and ingress/egress difficulties from properties opening onto W. 70<sup>th</sup>.
- Object to roundabout in front of monument sign that would take green space of property. Mn/DOT already took over 2 acres of their property. Consider shifting to the south and use public land. The intersection seems to be working well.
- Object to the removal of left-turn-lane out of parking lot onto W. 70<sup>th</sup>.
- Support left-turn-lane going east on W. 70<sup>th</sup> into parking lot.
- Suggested a right-turn-lane going west on W. 70<sup>th</sup> into parking lot; the owner of the property has consented to change.
- He thanked the ETC, SAC and City staff.

**Jan Ferrell, 4704 W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**(See handout #3)**

- Hoped that she will be able to get the questions and answers put on the internet that were submitted at the open house and sample survey of questions that were submitted two days ago.
- Ask to defer decision to look at wise use of funds for roadway for next 40 years.
- No dramatic increase in traffic over last 20 years.
- Interesting look to city with all the roundabouts being proposed.
- Evaluate effectiveness of existing roundabouts.
- Did Westin study come to fruition or did it have a surprise effect that study did not show?
- 27% of eastbound traffic had Richfield destination – do they still? Can reduce 27% of cars if understood where they're coming from.
- Evaluate W. 70<sup>th</sup> at Hwy. 100 long term of two large dual roundabouts.
- Considering shortage of state funds, when is completion? Which segment would be completed first? Nothing is anticipated until after 2012 according to city map.
- Study to fund low cost solution.
- Close right turn at Hwy. 100 to mirror west side.
- Increase timing of stoplight at Cornelia.
- Install pedestrian activated crossing at Wooddale and West Shore.
- Need fresh eyes, other than SRF, for fresh solution.
- Oppose access restriction to their property and on-street parking.
- Street should match land use of R1.
- Reduce volume before you attempt to calm or manage traffic.
- As a 'to be assessed property owner' she thanked Gene Persha for pointing out that it's the residents directly on W. 70<sup>th</sup> who will be most affected.
- Submitted a sample survey similar to ones sent to the Country Club, Woodhill and other neighborhoods that can be used to survey those residents who will be paying.
- Not everyone has the same vision as the homeowners' association; do not want bike lanes and do not want to give up parking; cannot work with an organization that does not allow her voice to be heard. Asking for the residents on W. 70<sup>th</sup> to be surveyed to hear their vision.

**Richards Simmons, 4800 Dunberry Lane**

- Parallel roads such as Dunberry Lane and Wilford Way will assume even more traffic.
- There are small children living on these roadways.

**Kristine Norton, 7007 Cornelia Drive****Member of the Greater W. 70<sup>th</sup> St. Homeowners' Assn**

- Would like Ron Rich to speak more about the plan they have been supporting for over one year.
- Support what other speakers have said.
- Traffic counts have not changed much but it has been too high for too long.
- Consider downgrading the street from a B-minor. Is this in any of the plans?
- Becoming a non-State Aid road to remove truck traffic –not mentioned in any plans either.
- Small children on W. 70<sup>th</sup> also.
- More consideration for crosswalk, diverting traffic, etc.

**Josh Sprague, 4720 70<sup>th</sup> Street****Member of the Greater W. 70<sup>th</sup> St. Homeowners' Assn**

- Lived in Minneapolis with a strong tradition of neighborhood associations where policy tends to come from the people and up. Done a little different here. Ground rules were set for transparency but haven't seen a real cooperating of the neighborhood vision.
- SAC has failed starting with the Braemar meeting – area residents were not included as stakeholder, but other areas of interest were.
- Chair Wanninger did not accept invitation to meet with the association; others accepted invitation, including Council members, Senator and Commissioner Brown.
- Association's lone board member on the SAC was at Council member Masica's urging.
- Requested to be on agenda to explain vision and request was ignored.
- Ask for SAC format to include public input, but it was not allowed.
- Arneson Parkway taken as a concept but not shown properly; tacked on the parkway concept to roundabouts.
- State Aid policy has not been openly discussed; wants something that will solve the problem other than side streets.
- Only hear about project of 19,300 cars on street.
- Have an opportunity to go back and bring neighbors together.
- Direct traffic to appropriate commercial corridors.

**Christopher Rywelski, 4517 Gilford Drive**

- Traffic on France Avenue is caused by traffic lights not being timed properly; research is needed.
- More research on roundabouts.
- Drivers are not used to roundabouts and therefore, will cause more problems.

**David Rodbourne, 4501 Dunberry Lane**

- Scope is constraint, narrow geographical area, consider alternative.
- Keeping traffic down is crucial.
- Focus on slowing traffic – it's a raceway!
- Reduce speed limit to 25 mph.
- Decrease lane width.
- Put stoplight or 4-way stop-sign at Wooddale.

- East and west end of W. 70<sup>th</sup> need speed bump to slow traffic.
- Safety is critical; roundabout next to school is unimaginable.
- Diversion of traffic to Dunberry Lane during church functions.

**Kate Jones, 6915 Langford Drive**

**Representing her family who lives in the area of W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street**

- Like what CPC had to say about Normandale Road and W. 70<sup>th</sup> St.
- Speed is high.
- Acknowledged the amount of work being done and thank everyone involved.

**Gene Persha, 6917 Cornelia Drive**

- Rules of procedures for commission, boards and committees. It is important that member of the public get the opportunity to speak at every meeting. Planning Commission does this very well.
- Key people are those on W. 70<sup>th</sup>; lesser groups are those north and south of W. 70<sup>th</sup>.
- Suggested that SAC listen to association about their own vested interest.
- Agree with CPC's suggestions.
- Need time and respect to share opinion.
- Those on other streets can weigh-in and give sometime to also voice opinion.
- Walked home from work when living in Washington, D.C. and had to cross roundabout and it was problematic.
- Can safely cross them with traffic lights.
- Have seen many roundabouts in Europe and elsewhere, but none in residential neighborhoods.
- Rides a bike and roundabouts poses danger for cyclists (from experience using the Minnehaha roundabout).
- Oppose roundabout at Cornelia and West Shore.
- Commend CPC on wanting to keep their green space.
- A roundabout is possible at Hwy. 100 & 70th, not impacting neighborhoods.
- Experiments were suggested but none were tried: signage on W. 70<sup>th</sup> directing traffic to other routes; shutting down the Hwy 100 ramp for 1-day – SRF said this could not be done; however, he would challenge them on this; shut down W. 70<sup>th</sup> and send traffic to Valley View. We do not know what will work until we try.
- Wildcard is what can be done to reduce. In Washington, D.C. the lanes were sometimes reversed.

**Sheila Rzepecki, 6617 Normandale Road**

**(See handout #4)**

- Opposes Arneson Parkway because traffic will be diverted to W. 66<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Bob Rofidal, 7125 Bristol Blvd**

- Kids and roundabouts will not work, need stoplights.
- Until something is done with W. 77<sup>th</sup>, W. 70<sup>th</sup> will continue to be the alternative.
- Make France Avenue and Hwy. 62 similar to Hwy. 494 where Best Buy is located (do not have Best Buy to fund it though).
- Plug up streets with roundabouts and neighbors will cut thru to avoid them – need free flowing street.

**Harold Babb, 4701 W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street**

- Attended open house and congratulated staff for the information that was provided; was disappointed though because traffic volume needs to be addressed before looking at concepts.
- Not for or against the concepts presented.
- Data collected confirmed what was already known in 1985.
- Everyone agrees that there is too much traffic; however, no agreement on how to reduce traffic.
- Concentration should be on traffic reduction by at least 25%; 50% is not feasible.
- Concentrate on east and west end of W. 70<sup>th</sup>; the in-between stuff as been around for years and will continue.
- What will the SAC based their recommendation on 2/26?
- Cannot support any of the concepts, including Arneson Parkway.
- No one has spoken about W. 66<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Immediately deal with Hwy. 100.
- Roundabouts will become obsolete
- Put traffic reduction at top of list and reduce by 25%.
- Observed how important it is for Hwy. 100 and Normandale. He was on the committee in 1985 when Council approved elimination of the right turn-lane. The right turn-lane is significant to the synchronization of the traffic lights is what he was told by the consultant then. Must eliminate the right turn, they knew then how important it was and still is now. One simple thing.
- Difficult to get out on to W. 70<sup>th</sup> when cars are coming over the hill. He calls them 'maverick traffic.' It's the one or two cars that cause the problems.

**Ralph Campbell, 6700 Pointe Drive  
President of Cornelia PTO**

- As an organization, taken a position on W. 70<sup>th</sup>, but would never presume to advise as to design.
- Encouraging a design that reduces traffic levels and speed.
- Provide safest crossing possible.
- Provide safe rights-of-ways for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Decreases number of idling vehicles at W. 70<sup>th</sup> and Cornelia.
- Consider sidewalk along Cornelia connecting Rosland Park, pool and ball park.

**Susan Norback, 6620 West Shore**

- Echoed sentiments that 5<sup>th</sup> graders and roundabout will be hard.
- What will happen to other streets when traffic is reduced on W. 70<sup>th</sup>.
- What happens to W. 66<sup>th</sup> St.? Will they be in the same position as W. 70<sup>th</sup>?
- Had some improvements on her street that she was not happy with and they were not notified. Concerned that many were not notified regarding this project. The entire neighborhood should be notified; many people she's spoken to is not aware of this.

**Nancy Thorvilson, 7221 Oaklawn Avenue**

- South of 70<sup>th</sup> would benefit by anything done well, and cost could be absorbed also by South Garden because this is one of two exits that they have.
- Sub division – no one has look at this, not thought out well. Look at more than just 70<sup>th</sup>. Half traffic is not neighborhood traffic. Redirect them to Hwy. 494 and Hwy. 100. W. 66<sup>th</sup> is dead-end so no division there.
- Need to include people, wrong not to.

**Theodore Ciardelli, 4417 W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street**

- Is the objective to create more traffic or reduce traffic? What was the directive from Council? Is it a loss of revenue by county and so they need to get people to Southdale to generate more money?
- Commissioner Wanninger responded that the ETC deals with traffic as a result of Comprehensive Plan Land Use.
- The parkway looks like a great idea. North of Crosstown and France is what the area may look like with lots of rental properties.
- Keep neighborhood integrity.
- He told the resident who do not want to use Crosstown to get to Southdale to drive down W. 70<sup>th</sup> every chance she gets. He said his aunt, who lives in another city, was feeling guilty about using W. 70<sup>th</sup> after seeing the signs. He understands it is a nice cut-thru, but does not want it to be so difficult to pull out of his driveway and does not want it to become worse.

**Mark Chamberlain, 7000 Bristol Blvd**

- Works at the post office in the Cahill area and travels east and west at various times throughout the day; echo the thoughts of CPC regarding not keeping the status quo. There is too much going on as the road shifts from two to one-lane. Give dedicated turn-lane or eliminate turning. Eliminating right turn on red may be helpful
- Oppose roundabouts east of France. They are a joke. They are too small to function efficiently. Large ones take up more private land. Not good for residential neighborhood. Contradict preservation of neighborhood.
- Nothing has been said about the intersection of W. 70th St. and Valley View Road. There is no need for a roundabout there. The worse thing is to close W. 70<sup>th</sup> and Valley View; will put strain on other areas and inconvenient for residents to go to places like Lunds.
- Idea to reduce traffic by parkway concept eliminates the need for roundabouts and stoplights.

**Colby Wilkins, 4515 W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street****Member of homeowners' assn**

- You said this has to be in alignment with the Comprehensive Plan, therefore, this should require a comprehensive solution. Study goes up to 66<sup>th</sup> St. and 76<sup>th</sup> St. but does not include them; imposing a local solution and holding them hostage to the Comprehensive Plan, therefore asking for a comprehensive solution.
- 66<sup>th</sup> St. was open at one time and someone on the Planning Commission helped facilitated its closing; traffic was bumped back to 70<sup>th</sup> St.
- Looking for a community solution that is good for them and Southdale.
- 50 white boards – synthesize on one page;
- Did a good job east of France. He likes it.
- Some have been adversarial because they felt the ETC had been adversarial. Looking forward to working together.

**Geri Sjoblom, 5016 Valley View Road**

- Upset with parkway signs on W. 70<sup>th</sup>.
- W. 70<sup>th</sup> is an artery to get to Southdale and do not want to take the Crosstown to get there.
- Keeping the traffic on W. 70<sup>th</sup> is not the popular view, but she is in support of the traffic.

There being no further comments, Chair Wanninger said individuals would be assigned to address the questions and concerns that were raised. He reminded those who did not speak that they can complete a survey or share their opinion in writing. Chair Wanninger summarized the concerns that he heard as being volume, speed, safely crossing the street and not diverting traffic to other streets. He said it is not an easy process, but they are determined to find the best solution.

Commissioner Brown said there are a number of associations and groups, including a church and a school that are concerned about this issue and one concern is the awareness of this event which will also be echoed by the Planning Commission. He asked that each body inform their members of the activities taking place. At a minimum, he said the homeowners' association can be used to spread the word of activities taking place.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.